



# WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

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## TO THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

THE INITIALS WA/SAMA represent the Woman's Auxiliary to the Student American Medical Association. This auxiliary became a national organization in 1957 at Philadelphia.

Before that, the wives of medical students in several of the medical schools in this country were organized into social or study groups under such names as "Medwives" and "Medical Dames." In September 1955 the first chapter of the Woman's Auxiliary to the Student American Medical Association was developed at the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine.

The original idea for a student wives' organization is credited to Mrs. George H. Garrison of Oklahoma City. She wrote the following to the county auxiliaries in Oklahoma:

"Our auxiliary can scarcely afford to ignore so sincere a request for assistance. It will require very little outlay of effort or money on our part but the benefits that we will receive in future well-trained doctors' wives and the satisfaction that we have really served a need cannot be measured in hours and cents."

Wives of interns and residents in the area, as well as medical school students make up the Oklahoma group. They have described their purpose in organizing as twofold: to acquaint student wives with the profession of medicine and prepare them to take their position and responsibility as doctors' wives in the community where they may eventually settle; and to bring medical students and their wives into much-needed closer relationship with the local medical profession and their families for mutual benefit.

A one-year program outline suggested by these student wives covers a variety of topics. Included are a brief history of medicine, information about the medical school, a preview of the years to be spent there, the choices after medical schooling is completed, the doctor and his family, medical ethics, community responsibility, medical legislation and hobbies.

Panel discussions by doctors' wives on such matters as choice of location, finances and telephone eti-

quette and home-practice etiquette for wives are included in the program.

There are 38 chapters divided into eight geographical regions in 49 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Chapter activities vary according to the needs and desires of local members. Membership in the auxiliary to the SAMA is open to the wife of any medical student, intern or resident. The aim of SAMA auxiliary is educational. What could be of more importance than learning to become good wives of men who deserve the best?

The student A.M.A. was formed in Chicago in 1950. Today the Association is composed of more than 55,000 active and affiliate members in 74 medical schools and hundreds of hospitals throughout the United States and its territories.

Constitutional provisions provide active membership to students in SAMA-affiliated schools without respect to race, religion, color or sex. Active members are medical students who join affiliated chapters and maintain both national and local dues structures; affiliate members are interns and residents; members-at-large are medical students in schools as yet unaffiliated or American students enrolled in foreign schools; honorary members are practicing physicians and friends of SAMA who maintain a continuing interest in the Association.

Except for the Executive Director and his staff, all officers, delegates and committee members are medical students, interns or residents. The constitution of the Association clearly defines the reason for its existence: "The objects of this Association shall be to advance the profession of medicine, to contribute to the welfare and education of medical students, interns and residents, to familiarize its members with the purposes and ideals of organized medicine, and to prepare its members to meet the social, moral and ethical obligations of the profession of medicine."

Thus we have the Student American Medical Association and auxiliaries joining the American Medical Association and its auxiliary "to assist the medical profession in its determined effort to provide the best medical care for the people of the world."

MRS. THEODORE A. POSKA

*President, Woman's Auxiliary to the  
California Medical Association*